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Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Letter dated 2 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the official position of the Republic of Belarus on the reform of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 38.

(Signed) Alyaksandr **Sychov**
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Annex to the letter dated 2 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Position of the Republic of Belarus on the reform of the Security Council

1. Belarus is firmly committed to the key role of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security. Actions that bypass the authority given to the Security Council by the Charter of the United Nations undermine the legal bases of the established system of international relations and threaten the very foundations of the international legal order.

2. The Republic of Belarus supports the process of reform of the Security Council, taking into account the major changes in the international arena and the significant increase in the number of States Members of the United Nations. Effective reform of the Security Council can be achieved only by consensus among all the participants in this process.

3. Belarus attaches great importance to the efforts to ensure transparency, democracy and accountability in the working methods and procedures of the Security Council, including the decision-making process. Belarus fully supports the measures aimed at improving the flow of information regarding the Council's activities, increasing its cooperation with the General Assembly and further rationalizing the preparation and submission of its annual reports to the General Assembly. There is a need for increased transparency in the Council's work, first and foremost by providing adequate information on the outcome of the closed consultations of the members of the Council and on the activities of the sanctions committees and by increasing the number of briefings for States that are not members of the Council. Belarus has consistently advocated the Council's adoption of the practice of holding orientation discussions at the level of Ministers for Foreign Affairs on the most important issues on the international agenda.

4. The General Assembly's adoption of any resolution leading to amendments to the Charter of the United Nations must take place in accordance with Article 108 of the Charter.

5. The gradual codification of the use of the right of veto must be done with due regard for the authority given to the Security Council by the Charter of the United Nations, particularly under Chapter VII, and the position of the permanent members of the Council.

6. The process of all-round and balanced reform of the Security Council must be conducted on the basis of observance of and adherence to the principles of sovereign equality of States and equitable geographical distribution.

7. The increase in the membership of the Security Council is a pivotal element of the reform. The following measures and principles will facilitate the correction of the current imbalance in terms of regional representation on the Council, which infringes on the interests of the world's developing majority:

(a) Any expansion of the Security Council must be based on the principles of equitable geographical distribution and sovereign equality of States;

(b) The attainment of the broadest possible agreement on the entire package of reforms must not be subject to any predetermined time-frames;

(c) The membership of the Security Council in both categories should be increased by at least 11;

(d) Additional seats in the permanent-member category must be allocated to the countries of the three developing regions, namely Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean;

(e) In the absence of general agreement on the expansion of the permanent-member category, expansion should take place in the non-permanent-member category only, taking into account the interests and needs of all regional groups without exception.

8. Belarus supports the continuation of the efforts of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council to find the best possible and a generally acceptable formula for the qualitative reform of the Security Council and the number of its members.